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SHOCK OBESITY FIGURES IN BOROUGH SCHOOLS

Get your children down to the gym

By LWN reporter **GEOFF BAKER**
geoff@londonweeklynews.co.uk

PARENTS in Kensington and Chelsea are being urged to urgently take their children to the gym and swim at the new leisure centre after shock figures have revealed that one in three of the borough's 10 to 11-year-olds are overweight.

Alarmed councillors and health experts are calling on parents to act now to save their children from a life of illness, misery and mockery.

Frightening figures show that 13.1 per cent of Year 6 children in the borough's state schools are overweight – and a whopping 20.1 per cent are obese or very overweight.

With a weight problem affecting 33 per cent of children, alarm bells are ringing that Kensington and Chelsea faces becoming a Billy Bunter Borough as NHS research shows that the vast majority of overweight children – 79 per cent – will grow up to become fat adults.

Besides the associated health risks including diabetes and heart disease parents are being warned that overweight children are also being condemned to suffering a life of heart-breaking insults.

A new survey by Slimming World has found that 47 per cent of adults who struggle with weight loss have suffered ridicule and abuse at least once a week.

Insults reported range from staff in clothes shops laughing when overweight customers asked for larger sizes to supermarket staff making jibes about the contents of their shopping trolleys. Others reported humiliations including being filmed on smart-phones by strangers in the street, abuse shouted by passing motorists and overweight women on a night out jeered by men.



■ **GETTING FIT:** The Duchess of Cambridge talks to youngsters using the new £29 million leisure centre in Kensington which she officially opened last week. More photos of Kate's visit on pages 15 & 16.

The survey discovered that as a result of abuse, 65 per cent of overweight people turned in their misery to eat more food for comfort.

The call for parents to take action now to protect their children has come from the Leader of Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council, Cllr Nick Paget-Brown.

"There is troubling data about childhood obesity in parts of Kensington and Chelsea," said Mr Paget-Brown. "We want our children to have more years of good health than us, not less. For that we need to make sure that they grow up in and absorb a culture of good diet and exercise. It's up to us to show them the way."

Serious challenge

The new £29 million Kensington Leisure Centre, opened last week by The Duchess of Cambridge, has been designed to maximise facilities for losing weight and getting fit, with an eight-lane swimming pool, two fitness studios and a 120-station gym.

The council says: "Child obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. Obese children and adolescents are at an increased risk of developing social, psychological and other health problems. They are also more likely to become obese adults with poor health outcomes."

Parents in the borough are being told that they cannot start soon enough to help their children with their weight – as the council figures show that 20 per cent of children in state primary schools in Kensington and Chelsea are already overweight or obese by the time they are five-

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INSIDE THE
CITY'S
BRIGHT NEW
WEEKLY



Sophie - hard at work on her 50th birthday
- see page 13



Are the Stones heading for London?
- Find out on page 21

Centre up and running after break-in

THE distressing break-in at the Portobello Road Salvation Army community centre has cost £13,000 in lost equipment and damage repairs.

Major Paul Scott, who runs the 135-year-old centre which is used weekly for meetings of everyone from pensioners to toddler groups, has reported that £9,000-worth of items were taken by the burglars, including a keyboard, the PA system, a 50-inch TV, projectors, food that was being collected for needy families and nine postman's sacks of toys that the Army was planning to donate to local disadvantaged children.

"It's a terrible loss but I'm very heartened that some local people have already started generously giving donations to help us out," said Major Scott.

"The repairs have started to the doors, cupboards and cabinets that were smashed up and we have re-opened the centre for pensioners' meetings and the toddler groups."

An appeal has been launched to raise try funds to make the centre right again. Anyone wishing to donate should contact Major Scott at notting.hill@salvationarmy.org.uk

THE paper serving the HEART of London

Award winning actress appointed as TB ambassador

Fighting a disease that is prevalent in London

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson has appointed award-winning actress Emma Thompson as his TB Ambassador in a bid to raise awareness of the disease which is more prevalent in London than any other capital in the developed world.

The appointment comes as Public Health England and NHS England announce an £11.5 million investment to tackle TB cases over the next five years and as University College London Hospitals (UCLH) launches a unique mobile 'Find&Treat Service' health unit which will travel across the capital to help diagnose TB and other infectious diseases.

The campaign is of personal significance to Emma Thompson whose son Tindy Agaba was diagnosed and treated for TB by UCLH doctors. Tindy joined Deputy Mayor Victoria Borwick and UCLH staff to launch the van at Portcullis House in Westminster.

In 2013 there were 7,290 TB cases reported in England, an incidence of 13.5 cases per 100,000 of population – just under 3,000 of these were in London.

The UK has the second highest rate of TB among Western European countries and rates are

nearly five times higher than the US. TB is concentrated in large urban centres with TB clinics in London managing more cases a year than those in all other western European capital cities put together.

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson, said: "I am thrilled that Emma Thompson has agreed to be a TB Ambassador for London, lending her immense talent and enthusiasm to help raise awareness of this disease."

"Emma is passionate about taking action against TB following the experience of supporting her son through the diagnosis and treatment of this illness. I look forward to working closely



FROM THE
MAYOR'S
OFFICE

with Emma to support vital projects that work to help Londoners with this debilitating condition."

Emma Thompson sent a message of support to the launch saying: "I am delighted that my involvement in this fight will be ongoing as the Mayor of London has invited me to be his TB ambassador to highlight the action we need to take to fight this disease, a disease of which I have personal experience."

"My son Tindy's experience of being diagnosed and treated for TB is one of the reasons why I am committed to this cause. You are all aware of the scale of the problem and that this great world city has the unenviable title of being the TB capital of the developed world."

"The service provided by the Find&Treat van is invaluable and it clearly demonstrates that we can reach all sections of the community if we try. The scale of TB in London is a genuinely alarming situation that can and must be addressed and I look forward to supporting you all in this work in the coming months and years."

Deputy Mayor Victoria Borwick, said: "This mobile health unit is set to make a real difference to Londoners' health especially in the on-



■ COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE: Actress Emma Thompson with her son Tindy Agaba who was treated for TB at UCLH

going campaign to diagnose and treat TB. This unit will provide an invaluable service to our capital and help to tackle this disease."

The Find&Treat Service has been redesigned by UCLH to provide a ground-breaking mobile health service unit capable of testing and vaccinating for a range of serious public infections including TB, HIV and Hepatitis C – all of which are on the rise across the capital.



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WESTMINSTER City Council is committed to helping young people into employment and is very proud of the apprentices on its Apprenticeship Scheme. It has been a huge success with positive feedback from both apprentices and line managers.

Apprenticeships are an excellent way of gaining qualifications, work based skills and experience with all apprentices provided with relevant workplace placements and training from a recognised OFSTED provider.

The council's current apprenticeship programme is delivered in partnership with the London Apprenticeship Company with opportunities at the council advertised on their website.

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Fears growing that Crossrail will close down Soho Square

TRANSPORT For London says it is “too early to say” whether plans for Crossrail 2 will mean the closure of Soho Square for a number of years.

But fears are growing that the new railway project

● By LWN reporter **GEOFF BAKER**

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could shut down Soho Square and turn it into a navvies' yard.

New Chaplain at the Abbey

THE Reverend Mark Birch has been appointed Minor Canon and Chaplain of Westminster Abbey.

A new post at the Abbey combining the role of a Minor Canon with that of Chaplain to the Abbey community, the Reverend Birch took up his post this month. As a Minor Canon, he will be responsible for planning and participating in services, in particular the pastoral offices – baptisms, weddings and funerals – and memorial services.

As Chaplain, he will support the Canon Steward in responsibility for the pastoral care of the Abbey's 800 staff and volunteers and the Abbey's regular worshippers. The role of Chaplain has been filled in recent times by a self-supporting Minister and previously by religious Sisters.

Mark Birch comes to Westminster Abbey after two years as Priest-in-Charge of the parish of St Faith, Chaplain at the Hospital of St Cross and Chaplain at Treloar College in Alton, in the Diocese of Winchester. He was previously Chaplain at Helen and Douglas



House in Oxford, and before that Chaplain and Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. He served his curacy at the parish of Cirencester with Watermoor in the Diocese of Gloucester. He said this week: “It is a great delight to be joining the Abbey, and it will be a joy to work as part of such a talented team. The Abbey has a global reputation for liturgy and music of the highest calibre, and few places have greater spiritual or historical significance for the nation. It will be an enormous privilege to have a role in this illustrious institution, and, with others, to offer Chaplaincy to the employees and volunteers who are its ‘living stones’.”

The threat to business as usual in Soho Square comes as a new independent survey has estimated that the cost of Crossrail 2 could rocket by more than 30 per cent – rising an extra £6.6 billion to up to £27 billion.

Draft plans for the massive north-south tunnelling project, which aims to cut journey times from Tring in Hertfordshire to Bond Street by all of 16 minutes, reveal that Soho Square could be ‘cordoned off’ to be used as a temporary builders’ depot during works that could last 10 years.

The prospect of sharing much of a decade with the builders and being unable to get to Soho Square unless by foot is not expected to delight many key businesses in the square, which is the home to offices owned by Sir Paul McCartney, Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber, Barclays Bank and many advertising and creative companies.

Safeguarding the route

Crossrail was unavailable for comment on the scheme, and Transport for London was reluctant to discuss its details.

When asked about the prospect of Soho Square being shut down, TfL said: “It may be part of safeguarding the route but it is too early to say.”

TfL said that Crossrail “may need this area” as a space to put builders and construction plant necessary for the huge excavation project but details would not be available until consultations with businesses and residents were held later this year.

TfL was also reluctant to discuss reports that the iconic arthouse cinema Curzon Soho faces being demolished in order to build a ticket office and entrance for a new Crossrail 2 station.

The cinema was built in 1912 and some 7,000 Soho residents and Londoners have already signed a peti-

tion protesting against the threat to the historic building.

Meanwhile, a new report by independent consultants PwC indicates that Crossrail 2 will cost much more than was expected. In 2012, the cost of the scheme was estimated to be £20 billion, but the new cost is now put at around £27 billion.

The new report suggests that fares could fund the increased sum or that funds could come from the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy, a tax on land owners and developers used to bring in money for big building projects.

The Mayor, Boris Johnson, said: “Crossrail 2 is an essential infrastructure project and this report shows the range of financing initiatives we could employ to get it moving.

“We'll now be discussing those financing options closely with London boroughs, business groups and other key players who have a stake in getting behind Crossrail 2.”



WHY I LOVE SOHO



Mayor getting tough on gangs

■ FROM PAGE ONE

other criminal justice agencies have made tackling gang violence and the causes of gang violence a key priority.

The Mayor's office said: “The new Group Violence Intervention method (GVI) has already proven successful in the United States, where it was pioneered, and a similar model introduced in Glasgow in 2008 has seen youth violence drop by almost 50 per cent.

“It is being introduced in London as a direct result of the Mayor's international Gang Summit held at City Hall in June 2014.

“As part of the 12-month pilot, the police and key community representatives in the pilot boroughs will work together and ‘call-in’ gangs for face-to-face meetings where they will be made aware of Shield and told in no uncertain terms that their violent behaviour is no longer acceptable in their communities and must cease.

“Helping young people to exit gangs is a key part of the pilot and at this meeting, and throughout the process, those wishing to leave the gang will be offered help to do so with the funding boosting measures already in place to help young people leave gang life behind.”

The Mayor said: “Gang crime is down in London but a minority of young people continue to join gangs and commit serious crimes. It is time we gave these gang members a clear ultimatum – the police know who you are and if anyone in the gang steps out of line then every member will face consequences.

“There is absolutely no place for violence in our city and through Shield we are redoubling our efforts to stamp out gang crime once and for all.”

Huge progress

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Stephen Greenhalgh, said: “London has a gangs problem but it is not a crisis. The police have made huge progress in tackling gangs and youth crime is down, but a minority of individuals continue to cause significant harm and we need to take a tougher approach.

“Shield is about the police and the moral voices from the local community uniting together to send out the clearest message that the violence must stop or else the whole gang will be held to account. Evidence shows that this ‘one rule for all’ approach cuts violence and so following our gangs summit we developed this London pilot with the input of world-class experts who will continue to support the pilot and evaluation.”

Commander Neil Basu, who leads the Met's Gangs and Organised Crime Command, said: “The key to

tackling gang violence in London is for the Metropolitan Police Service to work in partnership with those communities most affected. Collectively we will do everything we can to bring offenders to justice, but also provide a meaningful alternative to those who want to turn their lives around and exit a gang lifestyle. This is the purpose of Shield.

“Shield will be led by borough police in partnership with local authorities; with the Met taking the lead regarding the enforcement element, building on the successes we have already had through the work of Trident and London boroughs.

“We will do everything we can within the criminal and civil law to bring all members of any targeted gang to justice. Gang members in London will know that if they commit crime there are consequences. They have a choice to make.”

The new project is based on the Group Violence Intervention model which has been responsible for reducing shootings in US cities by up to 60 per cent.

Professor David Kennedy, director of the New York-based National Network for Safe Communities, designed the GVI programme and will be offering support to the pilot in London.

He said: “The Shield pilot represents a major advance in addressing the small number of people driving serious violence in London. The approach behind Shield works: it has a long track record around the U.S. of effectively reducing violence, and it will work in London.

“It has unparalleled results in formal evaluations and its impact is dramatic when it takes hold on the streets. Shield will focus on preventing violence and incarceration among those most likely to be touched by both; helping law enforcement to do their job in a way that does not harm, and instead strengthens, the communities they serve; making a genuine offer of help to gang members who want a way out; and supporting the community to step forward, stand together with law enforcement, and reset its own public safety standards.”

Future is looking uncertain in Soho

■ FROM PAGE ONE

rapidly under way, and with rising rents looking likely, the future looks uncertain.

“We are calling for rate exemption in designated areas of special interest and heritage zones. The idea being to free up money to increase profits and thereby enabling retailer growth in these very special areas.

“A proposed ‘one tax’ would remove tax on square footage and make the traders stakeholders in the wider economy. Their profitable taxes would be split with HMRC and the local Boroughs.”

He added: “This is not a middle-class fantasy nor naivety. This happens in Paris with bookshops, in Amsterdam with small retailers, and in Berlin and Dublin, too. So why not in London?”

“This method might actually see more revenue coming in to local authorities, and the money would be spread around locally. Central government, local government and the London Authority need to show willing here rather than just advocating the further selling off of land and much loved property.”

LONG established as one of London's most vibrant entertainment districts, for much of the 20th century, Soho had a reputation as a base for the sex industry in addition to its night life and as a location for the headquarters of leading film companies.

Since the 1980s, the area has undergone considerable transformation. It now is predominantly a fashionable district of upmarket restaurants and media offices – home to industry, commerce, culture and entertainment, as well as a residential area for both rich and poor.

Soho remains one of London's most charismatic areas in which to live and work – and that's why we are launching a new “Why I Love Soho” feature.

If you live or work in Soho we would like you to send us five reasons why you love Soho (maximum 300 words) so much.

Email your five “Why I Love Soho” reasons to

editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk stating your name, address or place of work, and attaching a photo of yourself.

◆ Copies of the London Weekly News are available in Soho from the Co-op in Berwick Street.

Community talent on show

CHURCH Street Library in Westminster unveiled its new community library wall at an event to celebrating the creative talents of people in local community.

More than 60 people attended the launch including Westminster councillors, artists and local people involved in designing the wall.

The guests were treated to performances from

By LWN Reporter

choirs from St Edward's Primary School and King Solomon Academy.

Local gallery, The Showroom, was commissioned to oversee the project with artist Christian Nyampeta holding art workshops with local children, schools, and local residents to create the design.



■ **LIBRARY ENTERTAINERS:** Pupils from St Edward's Primary School performed at the unveiling of the new community wall at Church Street Library in Westminster

The project was a chance for the local community to leave its mark on the newly refurbished building. The idea was that local residents could input creatively to the space by showcasing the artistic talents of community groups.

CLlr Steve Summers, Westminster Council's Cabinet member for Sports Leisure and Open Spaces, who attended the event., said: "This is a truly stunning piece of art work which people will be able to enjoy time and time again."

Artistic talent

"It stands as a testament to the creative and artistic talent we have here and reflects just what exciting things can be achieved when we work together as a community."

The artist in charge of leading the creative process was Christian Nyampeta. He was keen to find an open and collaborative way to give everyone involved their own place within the work so it would speak for the community.

He said: "Last Wednesday I was deeply touched by witnessing members of the communities pointing at details of the drawing and recognising themselves in the both the process of making and the result."

"I wanted the outcome to evolve into an open and long lasting invitation that is extended to those who work and make use of the facilities of the library to engage with the exemplary richness of community struggles of the neighbourhood and to encourage further interactions and solidarities between each other."

Installed over two storeys at the back of the Church Street library, the wall will remain as permanent installation for the public to enjoy.

The project has demonstrated that libraries serve not only for places of reading, learning and access to information, but also as platforms for creativity and cultural engagement within the community.



■ **IMPRESSED:** Cllr Steve Summers, Westminster Council's Cabinet Member for Sports, Leisure and Open Spaces, pictured with local residents after the unveiling of the community wall at the Church Street Library



■ **STUNNING:** The community wall at Church Street Library which is going to be a permanent fixture

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The London Weekly News website is currently under construction. In the meantime, if you would like to view the LWN pages digitally, you can access them by clicking onto <http://bit.ly/1vS5sI8>

Get your children to the gym

PARENTS in Kensington and Chelsea are being urged to urgently take their children to the gym and swim at the new leisure centre after shock figures have revealed that one in three of the borough's 10 to 11-year-olds are overweight.

Alarmed councillors and health experts are calling on parents to act now to save their children from a life of illness, misery and mockery.

Frightening figures show that 13.1 per cent of Year 6 children in the borough's state schools are overweight – and a whopping 20.1 per cent are obese or very overweight.

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The call for parents to take action now to protect

● By LWN reporter **GEOFF BAKER**

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Parents in the borough are being told that they cannot start soon enough to help their children with their weight – as the council figures show that 20 per cent of children in state primary schools in Kensington and Chelsea are already overweight or obese by the time they are five-years-old.

The overweight epidemic is no better at primary state schools in neighbouring Westminster – where 21% of four to five-year-olds are overweight or obese.

Among Westminster's 10 to 11-year-olds the fat figures have horrified health officials – with almost 40 per cent (39.4 per cent) overweight or obese.

Westminster powers are facing flak from health bod-

ies for allowing the capital's family-favourite attraction the London Eye to be newly-rebranded the Coca Cola London Eye, with heavy promotion including turning the Eye 'Coke Red' and staff in Coca Cola uniforms. A normal size can of Coca Cola contains the calorie equivalent of six teaspoons of sugar.

A spokesman for the child obesity charity Health Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young – which is part funded by the Department of Health – said: "If we are going to turn around rising rates of obesity we need to see a reduction in the promotion and availability of these kinds of products."



■ AWARD WINNERS: PC Jayne Richardson (left) pictured with DAC Fiona Taylor, Tarik Hardadou, Stephen Desmond and DAC Helen King

Another top award for police cadets co-ordinator

PC Jayne Richardson from Kensington and Chelsea has scooped the award for co-ordinator of the year for the second time running.

PC Richardson runs the Volunteer Police Cadets in Kensington and Chelsea borough. Her achievements during the last 12 months saw her collect her award at the first dedicated ceremony for the cadets at the London Oratory school.

It is not only the first time ever that a co-ordinator has won the award twice but also a win two years in a row.

Singled out for special praise among Jayne's achievements were the trip to Morocco with the cadets and having her cadets achieve the highest number of volunteer hours across the Met.

"I wasn't expecting to win again, it is amazing and I am so pleased and honoured," said Jayne.

Jayne runs three cadet evenings a week and has organised special events with YOU (Youth Organ-

isations in Uniform) and took a team of cadets to Morocco at the invitation of the Moroccan Government.

The Met said: "Jayne is dedicated and passionate in what she does providing support and guidance to both cadets and their families."

Assistant Commander Helen King added: "Cadets do amazing work - their enthusiasm for policing, their pride in the uniform and the contribution they make are an example to us all. They are the future and this is a well earned celebration of which I'm proud to be a part."

Each borough recognised achievements of their senior and junior cadets. In Kensington and Chelsea, the awards went to Tarik Hardadou, 16, from Earls Court, who won Senior Cadet of the Borough, and Stephen Desmond, 10, from Ladbroke Grove, who won Junior Cadet of the Borough.

Centre up and running after break-in

THE distressing break-in at the Portobello Road Salvation Army community centre has cost £13,000 in lost equipment and damage repairs.

Major Paul Scott, who runs the 135-year-old centre which is used weekly for meetings of everyone from pensioners to toddler groups, has reported that £9,000-worth of items were taken by the burglars, including a keyboard, the PA system, a 50-inch TV, projectors, food that was being collected for needy families and nine postman's sacks of toys that the Army was planning to donate to local disadvantaged children.

"It's a terrible loss but I'm very heartened that some local people have already started generously giving donations to help us out," said Major Scott.

"The repairs have started to the doors, cupboards and cabinets that were smashed up and we have re-opened the centre for pensioners' meetings and the toddler groups."

An appeal has been launched to raise try funds to make the centre right again. Anyone wishing to donate should contact Major Scott at notting.hill@salvationarmy.org.uk

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LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

Marking Holocaust Memorial Day

Keeping the memory alive

by Geoff Baker

IN schools all across West London and Westminster this week, children will be taught not just to learn but to learn to remember.

For this week marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and across the capital numerous events will be held to reflect on the death camps and how they represent the most evil hour in the entire history of the human race.

Every organisation involved in the Holocaust memorials across London shares one message – keep the memory alive.

Much-quoted on the many Holocaust websites is a paragraph from the last letter of a man called David Berger, who was murdered by the Nazis in Vilnius, Lithuania, in 1941.

David Berger was born 100 years ago in Przemysl in Poland. In 1939 he went to Vilnius to join a gathering of Zionist youth movements. On March 2nd 1941 he sent a postcard to his girlfriend Elza Gross. He was executed by the Nazis soon afterwards.

In his farewell message he wrote: “If something happens, I would want there to be somebody who remembers that someone named D. Berger had once lived. This will make it easier for me in the difficult moments.”

Unimaginable horror

Across London on January 27th – the day that Auschwitz was liberated by the Allies and the time when the full unimaginable horror of the consequences of racism was revealed – and all of this week, some will remember David Berger and the more than six million Jews who died in the Holocaust, unknown to most of us.

Two talks in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea libraries this week mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

On Monday the Mayor represented the borough at the Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony at City Hall. She said: “All those who attended this poignant event were able to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and also reflect on the many other dreadful atrocities which have happened since, sadly some all too recent.”

In an illustrated talk at Westminster Reference Library this week, Katy Jackson gave an illustrated talk on the work of the Weiner Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide.

More than 11 million people were exterminated by the Nazis in the death camps of the Holocaust; Jews, Poles, Romani, Russians, Communists and Leftists, Slavs, Serbs, Freemasons, the physically and mentally disabled, Jehovah Witnesses, homosexuals and British secret agents among them.

Perhaps the most dreadful of all – if anything can be ‘most’ dreadful about deaths and suffering that in every single case were heinous crimes against humanity – was the 1.5 million children who were murdered.

Babies and children too young to be considered of any use as labourers for the German war effort were put straight to death upon arrival at the death camps.

Calculating that the average child grows up to have two children on his or her own, over the generations of 70 years, that means 22.5 million people – those children of the camps and their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren – never lived because of the Holocaust.



The Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds

reflect on the many other dreadful atrocities which have happened since, sadly some all too recent



■ AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU, liberated on January 27th, 1945



These are the sort of stark facts that today's children will be taught in West London this week. In Kensington on Holocaust Memorial Day, students from Fox Primary attended a talk by Vanessa Woolf at Kensington Central Library on the story of Kazik Piechowski, a Polish boy scout who at the age of 18 was caught by the Gestapo and told, ‘we should shoot you but, actually, we have for you something much more interesting’.

It was a typical transportation in a cattle truck, with no water, food, nor warmth, to Auschwitz and the following is an example of the sort of usual day there.

The prisoners' day began at 3am with roll call which lasted four hours. They were ordered to line up outdoors in rows of five and had to stay there until 7am, when the German officers arrived.

Meanwhile the guards would force the prisoners to squat for an hour with their hands above their heads or levy punishments such as beatings or detention for infractions such as having a missing button or an improperly-cleaned food bowl.

The inmates were counted and re-counted. Even the dead had to be present at roll call, standing supported by their fellow inmates until the ordeal was over.

After roll call, the work details walked to their place of work, five abreast, wearing striped camp fatigues, no underwear, and ill-fitting wooden shoes

without socks. A prisoner's orchestra was forced to play cheerful music as the workers left the camp.

The working day lasted 12 hours. Much of the work took place outdoors at construction sites, gravel pits, and lumber yards. No rest periods were allowed. A second mandatory roll call took place in the evening. If a prisoner was missing, the others had to remain standing in place until he was either found or the reason for his absence discovered, regardless of the weather conditions, even if it took hours.

Prisoners received a hot drink in the morning, but no breakfast, and a thin meatless vegetable soup at noon. In the evening they received a small ration of mouldy bread. The daily intake did not exceed 700 calories, except for prisoners being subjected to live medical experimentation, who were better fed.

Infested with vermin

Sanitary arrangements were poor, with inadequate latrines and a lack of fresh water. In Auschwitz, latrines were not installed until 1943, two years after camp construction began. The camps were infested with vermin such as disease-carrying lice, and the inmates suffered and died in epidemics of typhus and other diseases. Noma, a bacterial infection occurring among the malnourished, was a common cause of death among children.

Those who endured this life in Auschwitz were the ‘luckier’ ones. For some 2.5 million others, babies to the elderly, death was delivered by the Nazis by gassing, shooting, hanging, beating and torture.

In this time of rising racial tensions across the capital and in Europe, the Paris-based Aladdin Project has issued a call for reflection on Auschwitz and its example of what can happen when faiths and beliefs collide: “With every pass-

ing day, we witness a rising tide of hatred and violence filling the gulf of misunderstanding. This particularly affects the current relations between Muslims and Jews. In the face of ignorance, prejudice and competing memories that we reject, we believe in the power of knowledge and the primacy of history.

“The Holocaust is a historical fact: the genocide in which six million European Jews were exterminated. To deny this crime against humanity is not only an insult to the memory of the victims, but also an insult to the very idea of civilization. Hence, we believe that the teaching of this tragedy concerns all those who have at heart the will to prevent further genocides.”

The London-based Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, whose patron is The Queen, has called on all in the capital to be involved in the events and activities of the week, by attending or sharing a Holocaust story on social media from the many on their website – www.hmd.org.uk – or by lighting a candle to signify the importance of keeping the memory alive.

You don't have to be Jewish to take part, only human.



LWN

LONDON WIDE

Talks ongoing to avoid ambulance strike action

TALKS in London involving GMB to avert strike action this Thursday in the pay dispute in England and Northern Ireland were continuing early this week.

A 24-hour stoppage by GMB members in the ambulance service will commence at one minute past midnight on Thursday and continue until 11.59 pm. Unison and Unite ambulance members with commence a 12-hour strike from 12 noon on that day.

GMB and the other health unions will also take strike action on Thursday. This will be a 12 hour stoppage from 9am to 9pm in the rest of NHS. For the other union this action will be followed by action short of strike until February 24th. This will be followed with a 24 hour stoppage on Wednesday, February 25th, the time to be confirmed.

GMB members have already taken part in the strike action in the NHS across England & Northern Ireland in October and November last year.

GMB conducted an official ballot of 22,000 members in the NHS in England and Northern Ireland. There was overwhelming support for industrial action to secure a better offer. The pay offer for NHS staff in England and Northern Ireland is 1 per cent cash payment in 2014, restricted to staff not eligible for incremental progression and the same approach in 2015. This goes against the recommendation of the independent NHS Pay Review Body for a 1 per cent consolidated pay rise for all staff.

Rehana Azam, GMB National Officer, said: "We are pleased we are still in the talks. We are making every effort to get a tangible offer on the table to take back to our members to avert the strike next week".

1,000 different beers now brewed in London

LONDON is seeing resurgence in the city's breweries as new figures suggest the number of beer makers has quintupled over the last three years with more Londoners turning to brewing as a career.

With around 1,000 brands of beer now produced in the capital there has been an explosion in flavour and diversity of beers, leading to an ever increasing demand for London's new breweries, supporting our growing economy and creating jobs.

The 'father' of London's breweries – Fullers is leading the way for the city's growing brewing sector training its new recruits on brewing techniques, laboratory analysis and exporting abroad, offering a wealth of opportunities for London's booming beer industry.

Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss visited the 170 year old brewery which proves great British beer is still thriving both here and abroad with the company now exporting to almost 80 countries – more than ever before.

Fullers are blazing the trail for London's 72 breweries showing the world's the limit as exports of their finest beer have increased by more than 400 per cent over the last ten years to countries ranging from Sweden to Brazil. The company have also invested an additional £1.7 million in new conditioning tanks to meet global demand for their beer.

These exports build on record numbers showing the world has an ever increasing thirst for UK beer with our breweries exporting 1.1 billion pints to 113 countries in 2013 – more countries than ever before – generating £630 million for the UK economy supporting our long-term economic plan. This has contributed to a record year for the UK food chain which generated £103 billion in 2013 and now employs 1 in 8

people. Since 2010 the government has signed deals to open more than 600 food and drink markets abroad with overall exports up 7 per cent in the same period, reaching a record £18.9 billion in 2013.

The Government supported the beer industry in last year's budget by cutting duty on every pint by 1p for the second year in a row. They have also scrapped the beer duty escalator which added inflation plus 2 per cent to the pint.

Business booming

Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss said: "From the great brewhouses of the 18th century to today's entrepreneurial micro-breweries – beer and brewing is as much a part of London as the black cab."

"It is fantastic to see business booming with so many more beer makers opening up shop in the capital, providing jobs and generating millions for our growing economy."

"Across the country we've had huge successes shipping more than a billion pints around the world in one year – Fullers, one of our oldest brewing companies, is helping lead the charge exporting an impressive 46,000 barrels last year."

"We want more of our breweries to follow in the footsteps of Fullers, satisfying the growing worldwide thirst for a great British pint."

Simon Emeny, Chief Executive of Fuller, Smith & Turner P.L.C.: "As the oldest brewer in London, we are delighted to see the recent surge and interest in the London brewing scene. We believe that a wider choice in beer is good for the consumer; it brings new people to the beer market and is therefore good for us. Brewing is one of Britain's great traditions and is one of its greatest exports."

"Over recent years our own business has gone from strength to strength and we hope that has helped to inspire the next generation of brewers."

BREAKING NEWS

Man critical after double-stabbing in Kensington

TWO men are in hospital, one with critical injuries, after a stabbing in Kensington in the early hours on Monday morning.

Police were called to Kensington Mall, near Notting Hill, at about 3.30 am.

They found one man in his mid-twenties with knife wounds and another man of a

similar age in nearby Royston Court.

One of the men is in a serious condition, according to police.

Parts of Kensington Church Street were closed for several hours while police carried out investigations.

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Kensington News pick up points

TCG Co-op MM Premium	210-212 Earls Court Road	Kensington	SW5 9QB
Sainsbury's Store	158a Cromwell Road	South Kensington	SW7 4EJ
Tesco Metro	146-148 High Street	Kensington	W8 6SU
Sainsbury's Store	Ladbroke Grove	London	W10 5AA
Tesco Metro	224-226 Portobello Rd	Notting Hill	W11 1LJ
Tesco Metro	114-120 Notting Hill Gate	Notting Hill	W11 3QE
Tesco Super Store	West Cromwell Road	Kensington	W14 8PB
Kensington Central Library	Philimore Walk	Kensington	W8 7RX
North Kensington Library	108 Ladbroke Grove	Kensington	W11 1PZ
Brompton Library	210 Old Brompton Road		SW5 0BS

London Weekly News pick up points

Sainsbury's Store	Melbourne Avenue	West Ealing	W13 9BZ
Tesco Metro	94 Church Street	Paddington	NW8 8EX
Tesco Classic Metro	17-25 Regent Street	London	SW1Y 4LR
TCG Co-op City	104-105 Berwick Street	Soho	W1F 0QS
Sainsbury's Store	38 Stratton Street	Mayfair	W1J 8LT
Sainsbury's Store	15-17 Tottenham Court Road	Central London	W1T 1BJ
TCG Co-op MM Mainstream	504-506 Harrow Road	Paddington	W9 3QA
Tesco Classic Metro	22-25 Bedford Street	London	WC2E 9ED
TCG Co-op City	Golden Cross House	London	WC2R 0RG
Notting Hill Gate Library	1 Pembroke Square	Notting Hill	W2 4EW
Kensal Library	20 Golborne Road		W10 5PF

Westminster & Pimlico News pick up points

Sainsbury's Store	99 Wilton Road	Pimlico	SW1V 1DT
Tesco Metro	18-28 Warwick Way	Westminster	SW1V 1RX
Tesco Classic Metro	Dean Street	Westminster	W1D 3RS
Tesco Classic Metro	10-16 Goadge Street	Westminster	W1T 2QB
Tesco Metro	90-100 Edgware Road	Westminster	W2 2EA
TCG Co-op City	19-21 Store Street	Westminster	WC1E 7DB

Chelsea News pick up points

Chelsea Library	Chelsea Old Town Hall	Chelsea	SW3 5EZ
Chelsea Sports Centre	Chelsea Manor Street	Chelsea	SW3 5PL

Big fines for unauthorised works on listed buildings

KENSINGTON and Chelsea Council is to write to owners of the 3,800 listed buildings in the borough to remind them that they face big fines if they get the builders in without permission.

The council says: 'Listed buildings are such an important part of our heritage that it is a crime to carry out works on one without first getting consent from the council.

'If unapproved works take place both the owner and the builder will be liable and can be

fined up to £20,000 for a single offence'.

In an attempt to remind, and in some cases inform, owners and householders that their building is listed, planners from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea are writing to all the borough's listed homes this year.

When a property has listed status this means:

- The whole of the building is protected and specifically includes the inside as well as the outside and all architectural features and structures within the grounds.
- A listed building may not be demolished or

altered in any way unless listed building consent has been obtained from the Royal Borough.

● That consent may be required for works of repair, cleaning or painting (or repainting of the interior or exterior).

● All grades of listed buildings are equally protected.

"This does not necessarily mean that a listed building has to be preserved exactly as it is now, but alterations and extensions must be carried out in a manner that respects the build-

ing's historical and architectural importance,' says the council.

Councillor Timothy Coleridge, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, said: 'Listed buildings come in all shapes and sizes ranging from the iconic Trellick Tower to a Holland Park Mews house.

"One thing they do have in common though is the responsibility for the owner to ensure they are properly looked after. This means there are tight rules governing what can and cannot be done inside and outside the building which often catches our residents out."

New bursaries for budding artists

NEW artists in Kensington and Chelsea are being offered the chance to team up with the prestigious Chelsea Arts Club.

The Kensington and Chelsea and Chelsea Arts Club Trust has announced two new bursaries for budding artists and designers as part of the council's artists' studio programme.

Chelsea Arts Club Trust has offered the two bursaries: one for a visual artist, the other for a fashion designer. Each bursary is for three-years, at the all-inclusive rate of £10,000 a year.

The generosity of the trust will be matched by the Council, which will cover the rent and rates on each studio.

Councillor Timothy Coleridge, the Council's Cabinet Member for the Arts, said: "We are delighted to announce these two bursary opportunities and acknowledge the generosity of the Chelsea Arts Club Trust.

"The trust shares our commitment to supporting the highest standards of artistic practice in the Royal Borough, and nurturing new talent, and there can be no better testimony to that than the announcement of these two new bursaries.

"Previous bursary recipients such as Jodie Carey

and Julian Wild have gone on to develop distinguished careers as professional artists, while leaving a legacy that benefits not only practising artists but also the wider community in the Royal Borough.

"We hope our two new awardees – whoever they may be – will go on to emulate the achievements of their now illustrious predecessors."

Donald Smith, Chair of Trustees of the Chelsea Arts Club Trust, said: "We very much welcome this partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which demonstrates a very real commitment to art and design and an investment in people.

"Constrained by financial pressures, it is very hard for even the most talented artists and designers to find the time and money to make their work and take up opportunities in a nurturing environment from which artists and designers can flourish and progress to the next level on their career paths.

"With our support the award recipients will hopefully succeed in their ambitions and, in turn, contribute to the life of the Royal Borough and the wider community."

Full details of each bursary can be found at:
www.rbkc.gov.uk/fashiondesigners and
www.rbkc.gov.uk/visualartist

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NEWS FROM NICK ...

with Nicholas Paget-Brown, Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

● LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, NICK PAGET-BROWN, PRAISES HIS A-TEAM FOR DELIVERING A WONDERFUL NEW ACADEMY AND LEISURE CENTRE FOR THE PEOPLE OF NORTH KENSINGTON

Part of a more ambitious plan for North Ken regeneration

AT THE denouement of an episode of the A-Team it was always highly likely that Colonel John 'Hannibal' Smith would remove his cigar momentarily to say "I love it when a plan comes together."

And the Colonel was dead right, it is indeed a wonderful moment. Of course his plans generally involved a fake explosion followed swiftly by a stuntman trampolining to an unconvincing death over the bonnet of a jeep.

Our plan was somewhat different, and with all due respect to the Colonel, somewhat more difficult to bring off.

It needed the help of our future Queen and hundreds of well scrubbed children in smart school uniforms waving Union Jacks.

It required two glistening new public buildings that have given the whole area an aesthetic boost.

It demanded a brand new academy providing additional school places in a borough that does better at GCSE than practically any-

where else. And as if that wasn't enough, it also required a new leisure centre which is surely set to be one of the very best in London.

Bringing that plan together has not been easy. It has been the culmination of

● **She was absolutely terrific – charming and gracious to functionaries such as I, warm and friendly to the school children and to our basketball players and tai-chi-ers over in our splendid new sports halls** ●

years of planning, years of saving so that we could meet more than two thirds of the overall cost (£40 million of a total of £57million, the rest coming from the Government), and it has meant long years of work by members, planners, lawyers, leisure and education experts, project managers and many others drawn from right across the Council.

I was lucky enough to be one of those there to apply the finishing touches by

giving Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge the tour of our new buildings and she was absolutely terrific – charming and gracious to functionaries such as I, warm and friendly to the school children and to our basketball players and tai-chi-ers over in our splendid new sports halls.

Monday 19 January was a very proud day quite frankly and I couldn't help but reflect on how lucky the Royal Borough has been to have its very own A-Team to make it all happen. And the important thing to understand is this: the new academy and leisure centre are just part of a much bigger and more ambitious plan for regenerating North Ken.

That plan involves hundreds of new homes, the restoration of traditional street patterns, new school buildings and entirely new schools, new businesses and much, much else besides.

It's ambitious alright, even for the team that has already delivered the academy and leisure centre, but we aim to bring that plan together too, so watch this space.

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LONDON WIDE

● GATWICK REPORT CLAIMS 320,000 EXTRA PEOPLE WILL BE AFFECTED BY NOISE

Runway row takes off again

THOUSANDS of residents in Kensington and Chelsea have been warned that new flight paths will pass over the borough if plans to expand Heathrow airport are followed through, causing untold levels of noise pollution.

Bosses at London's other major airport, Gatwick,

By Jack Dixon

have written to households in the area surrounding Heathrow, warning that 320,000 extra people will be affected by noise if a third runway is built.

They suggest 16 of the capital's most densely populated boroughs will be flown over if the expansion

is given the green light, and call for residents to back a new runway at Gatwick instead.

The airport's latest retort comes after Heathrow bosses claimed there was a "growing consensus" behind the plans, with more than half approving the expansion in a recent poll.

The verbal sparring continues as the Airports Commission's consultation on runway capacity draws to a close next week (February 3rd).

"Some 320,000 people will be newly impacted by noise if Heathrow expands", said Alastair McDermid, Gatwick's Airports Commission Director.

Health impacts

"In contrast, if it was to remain as a two-runway airport Heathrow's noise footprint would actually reduce because of new quieter aircraft."

He added: "As we reach a crucial phase of the Airports Commission process, we would encourage all interested residents to have their say and respond to the national public consultation into airport expansion."

Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council is a member of the '2M' group of London authorities united in opposition to Heathrow expansion.

A council spokesman said the scale of the proposed development warrants a more detailed assessment of the environmental and health impacts before any decisions are made.

Both airports were visited by record numbers of passengers last year, with more than 73 million fliers touching down or taking off from Heathrow alone.

Meanwhile, the number of people passing through Gatwick flew up to 38.1 million – an increase of 7.6 per cent on the previous year.

Only one, however, will secure the Commission's recommendation for an extra runway, and the impact of noise on the surrounding boroughs could play a key part in the decision.

The World Health Organisation warns that regular noise problems can have serious social and medical connotations, with an increase in stress and aggression among the possible side effects.

Noise pollution can affect both the old and the young, it says, with potential impacts ranging from rising blood pressure to problems with child development.

An All Party Parliamentary Group set up to investigate noise issues at Heathrow published a report shortly before Christmas, concluding that successive



■ **FLYING LOW:** According to Gatwick Airport this will become a more familiar sight over West London if a third runway is built at Heathrow

governments, as well as the aviation industry, have "underestimated and continue to underestimate" the impact of noise from the airport's flight paths.

The MPs warned that failure to take action to address the problem would represent a "Victorian disregard for the population of London."

A reported 86,000 complaints were made to Heathrow about aircraft noise in the space of just five months last year.

John Stewart, chair of the anti-expansion group Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise (HACAN), said the airport's noise issues continued to be a significant blocker against a new runway.

"Heathrow is in a league of its own as far as noise is concerned", he said.

"Twenty-eight per cent of all people impacted by noise in Europe live under the Heathrow flight paths. It remains the biggest political barrier to the expansion of the airport."

Heathrow points to a recent Populus poll suggesting that 58 per cent of residents in the airport's surrounding constituencies "feel positive" about the expansion.

The airport's CEO John Holland-Kaye said: "There is a growing consensus that expanding Heathrow is vital for the British economy. It will create 180,000 jobs up and down the country and keep Britain at the heart of the global economy."

"Now we can see that it is not only the right solution, it is also deliverable. With the majority of local residents backing expansion, the time has come to be ambitious and get on with it."

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Marcus Whittington, Managing Director of Bath Boutique Stays



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MAYOR OF LONDON CAMPAIGN

Dame Tessa's pledge on empty home owners

DAME Tessa Jowell, the Labour MP who is the bookies' favourite to become the next Mayor of London, has kicked off her campaign with a pledge to get tough on the owners of empty houses in Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and across the capital.

Dame Tessa, currently the MP for Dulwich, has hit out at the "buy-to-leave super-rich" and says she wants London's 22,000 empty houses to be freed up to provide homes for half of the 114,000 people currently living in temporary accommodation.

Launching her bid on the website of The Independent, she said: "Today in London, hundreds of thousands of people are stuck in temporary accommodation, on social housing waiting lists or face years of saving short of buying their first home."

"At the same time the global super-rich buy

London homes like they are gold bars, as assets to appreciate, rather than homes in which to live.

"In a city enduring a housing crisis, those homes could house 55,000. That's a scandal and it's time to get tough. Absentee owners should live in the house they own or sell up – or face uncapped charges until they do."

Under Dame Tessa's plan, councils would be able to levy unlimited penalties on owners who leaves houses empty for six months."

■ **Labour candidate Dame Tessa Jowell**



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London drinkers admit 'dry January' defeat

MORE than half of drinkers in London who vowed to have a dry January have fallen off the wagon early, research into the nation's drinking habits reveals.

Nearly one in six (16%) Londoners had planned to remain alcohol-free throughout January, according to the national survey commissioned by the Pharmacy2U Online Doctor service.

The start to the year has not been as 'dry' as expected though, with 54 per cent of those who challenged themselves not to drink any alcohol during January, admitting they have 'given in'.

Worryingly, the research found that alcohol is causing problems for more than a quarter of London's drinkers (28%), with issues including relationship conflict, health problems and difficulties at work.

By LWN reporter

Nearly one in five (19%) who took part in the study said they were concerned about a loved one's drinking.

The survey 2,050 British adults also found that nationally:

- The under 25s were the least successful at their dry January challenge, with a 64 per cent failure rate.
- Half of those who made a 2015 resolution to cut down on alcohol consumption have broken it already.
- One in four drinkers (26%) have alcohol most days, with half of them regularly exceeding recommended healthy limits.

ommended healthy limits.

- One in seven drinkers (14%) say they only drink excessively on social occasions.
- One in nine drinkers (12%) have at least half a bottle of wine, three pints of beer, or three large measures of spirits most evenings.
- One in 25 drinkers (4%) usually have a bottle of wine a night.

Dr Nitin Shori, Medical Director of the Pharmacy2U Online Doctor service and a working NHS GP, said: "It's a month when the nation talks more openly about their drinking habits, thanks to the dry January trend. While most don't need or want to cut out alcohol in the long-term, it gets people thinking about how much they usually drink and whether they'd

benefit from cutting down. It also proves how easy it is to give in to temptation!

"An unhealthy relationship with alcohol and regularly drinking too much can affect health and wellbeing, as well as impacting wider aspects of life too. We're seeing increasing numbers of patients seeking help from our online doctor service to reduce their alcohol intake – particularly since the launch of the Selincro pill last year, which helps to lessen the desire for a drink.

"Many find themselves in a pattern of excess drinking that's difficult to break. Recognising there's a problem can be one of the biggest challenges though – and some only make a change after loved ones raise the issue."

Letters to the Editor

Disabled unfairly treated over their right to buy

■ I'VE always believed that everybody should be treated equally, irrespective of their age, sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc. However, people with disabilities which restrict their access to many properties are treated unfairly because they are denied the Right to Buy an adapted property, basically because there are very few of them around.

My own father lost the use of his legs and was confined to a wheelchair for over 50 years. If he had moved into an adapted council property he would not have had the right to buy because it is legal to deny a disabled person the Right to Buy an adapted property. Being denied the Right to Buy did not just affect him but also those of us around him, i.e. my mum, my brother, my sister and myself.

However, if someone was denied the Right to Buy because of their race, sex, religion, etc. there would be hell to pay...and rightly so, but in the 21st century Britain still treats its disabled citizens in a discriminatory way which it would not treat any of its other citizens.

tory way which it would not treat any of its other citizens.

When I worked as an advocate for people with disabilities, about 70 per cent of my cases were to do with sorting out housing issues; getting clients transferred to ground floor properties when they were on the third or fourth floor of a block of flats where the lift often broke down, which in turn made them prisoners in their own properties; getting doorways widened, having slopes put in, etc.

Getting doorways widened in a property costs about £5,000. However, if all new residential properties were made with doorways about six inches wider, it would only cost a small fraction of that and would also enable disabled people to gain easy access into and around them.

The government would then not have a justifiable excuse to deny disabled people the Right to Buy, also, having a wheelchair accessible property does not just make it accessible to the current resident, it also makes it accessible to future ones as well as any of their visitors who may have mobility issues, even temporary ones, i.e. broken legs.

Being able bodied today does not mean you will never be disabled, like my father found out, as well as many of my clients when they had accidents, developed MS, Parkinson's disease, strokes, etc.

Steve Smith
(by email)

Your royal coverage is brilliantly written

■ I JUST wanted to say how much I enjoy the coverage of the Royal Family in the London Weekly News.

I appreciate that it may not be cool any more to be royalist but I am not ashamed of the fact that I am. Many Londoners feel the same.

All we read in other papers, especially the nationals, is negativity and it seems to me that your paper is the only one in London who provide positive coverage of our wonderful Queen and her close family.

I look forward every week to reading Geoff Baker's brilliantly written pieces on the royals. Last week's article on Sir Winston's Churchill's admiration for the monarch was particularly interesting and informative.

Keep up the good work.

J. M. Bishnell (Mrs),
Notting Hill
(by email)

Good to have a real local paper

■ I'VE just come across the Westminster & Pimlico News. It's great to have a local newspaper again and I must say that your new paper is doing a much better job in reporting on the community events of the City of Westminster than those that have gone before you.

The Evening Standard, whilst an excellent publication, is not really a London paper and many people, like me, don't have a computer and therefore cannot see local news, is there is any, via the worldwide web.

The first thing I do every Tuesday morning now is to walk down to my local supermarket and get a copy of the Westminster & Pimlico News. I've lived in London all my life but you have uncovered some interesting facts about the Royal Family that I have never heard before.

And I also like Charlie Mullins' column - he's got his head screwed on the right way!

Don Perkins,
Tachbrook Street,
Pimlico.

If you want to sound off about an issue affecting Central London, email your letter to editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

London trials on carbon emissions will help millions

FUTURISTIC blueprints to help cut London's carbon emissions were published last week by UK Power Networks, the company which keeps the city's lights on.

London was the test bed for a range of cutting-edge trials - the results of which will help millions of people across the UK if the energy industry introduces them widely. For example new-style energy contracts which have been trialled are already set to save customers in London, the East and South East £43 million over the next eight years, and the country could reduce the projected domestic electricity demand in 2020 by about 9% if people switch to more efficient household appliances.

After four years' work, 27 reports revealing results from the Low Carbon London trials are now available. The trials tested new 'smart grid' techniques on the electricity networks with thousands of Londoners to support growing uptake of low carbon technologies.

The £28.3million project explored ways to meet major extra demand on the capital's electricity system anticipated from local green electricity, heat pumps, electric vehicles (EVs) and solar panels - without overloading the network or adding significantly to electricity bills. Low Carbon London was funded through Ofgem's Low Carbon Networks Fund and by UK Power Networks.

The trials included rewarding customers to reduce their electricity consumption as required, flexible energy tariffs based on renewable energy output for domestic customers, electric vehicle charging schemes, a major home

appliance survey and monitoring the impact of green electricity systems.

UK Power Networks' partners on the Low Carbon London programme were Imperial College London, Siemens, CGI, EDF Energy, Greater London Authority, Transport for London, National Grid, the Institute for Sustainability, Flexitricity, Smarter Grid Solutions and EnerNOC.

Martin Wilcox, head of future networks at UK Power Networks, said: "This is the culmination of four years' hard work by 11 partners bringing together some of the leading names in smart grids. Low Carbon London brings us a vital step closer to the low carbon future and tackles the 'energy trilemma' to deliver low carbon, affordable, secure power supplies.

New smart techniques

"As green forms of electricity production, heating and transport increase, intelligent systems will be essential to monitor, control and balance significant extra pressures on our networks, without human intervention. Low Carbon London has tested new smart grid techniques in ways that have never been attempted before in Britain.

"Low Carbon London has demonstrated the importance of collaboration between diverse organisations. Everyone is in this together and we owe it to future generations to work together - policy-makers, industry, business and local communities - to act on the research, delivering smart changes for a low carbon future."

The Low Carbon London initiative introduced collaborative new working relationships to help deliver smart grids. It forged new commercial relationships between

UK Power Networks and four energy aggregators, plus arrangements with 37 demand response sites. The project involved control room integration with two demand response sites and system integration with a Charging Network Operator (CNO) to call off demand response from electric vehicle charging posts. The project also delivered a shared, multi-purpose time-of-use tariff with EDF Energy, a major energy supplier.

Carbon emissions from today's electricity system are around 450g/kWh³ and the Government is seeking ways in which to reduce this by between 100-200g/kWh by 2030. If only one of the initiatives demonstrated in Low Carbon London was fully adopted across the country, an additional contribution of 5g/kWh towards this reduction would be achieved, with the potential for far more. This could only be otherwise achieved by replacing a further 700MW of conventional generation with low carbon generation.

Matthew Pencharz, the Mayor's Senior Environment and Energy Adviser, said: "Helping Londoners access energy which is affordable, secure and sustainable is a key priority at City Hall.

"We have worked closely with UK Power Networks through Low Carbon London to help develop this dynamic blueprint that could develop the transformation of the capital to one of the most energy efficient cities in the world."

The Low Carbon London findings are accessible online at: ukpowernetworks.co.uk/innovation.

Helping Londoners access energy which is affordable, secure and sustainable is a key priority at City Hall

FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

London



WEEKLY News

ISSUE 8

PICK UP A FREE COPY

Thursday, January 29th 2015

No day off for birthday girl Sophie

Hard working Countess continues to fly the flag as she reaches her half century

NOT many people would choose to spend their 50th birthday visiting a school of tropical medicine to learn about the clinical trials to test vaccines for the ebola virus. But then not many people are Sophie, Countess of Wessex.

When she marked her milestone last week, you didn't find Sophie up to her neck in champagne and caviar, lording it large in celebrations that one might expect of other distinguished ladies of accomplishment.

Instead, The Firm's greatest young asset was doing what she does best – flying the flag for the Royal Family work ethic, visiting the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

The next day she was helping her father-in-law by promoting the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to the Women's Network

By Geoff Baker

Forum. The day after that she was chairing two charity meetings at Buckingham Palace.

This Wednesday she is down in Hampshire, bringing comfort and inspiration to people with heart problems and then off to two other engagements, one with children with learning disabilities and the other with seriously-ill children.

Selflessness

In a world that is darkly characterised by the me, me, me mentality, Sophie has lit a new flame for selflessness and compassion; and in doing so she is rapidly becoming recognised as the finest face of the world's leading family.

Her sister-in-law the Duchess of Cambridge may be the world media's favourite darling and the No 1 style guru for young women – according to a recent press release from leading plas-

LWN

ROYAL SPECIAL

tic surgeons, 'a nose like Kate's' is the new rage – but it is Sophie who is most receiving The Queen's approving nod in representing the values that Her Majesty holds most dear; duty, service and hard work.

It is no wonder that a few year's back that The Queen awarded Sophie the Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order; it is The Queen's greatest seal of approval and no higher top mark can be had.

"When Her Majesty became Queen she pledged that she would spend her life dedicated to the service of her people, Sophie has obviously taken a leaf from that prestigious book and her mother-in-law very clearly

Inside London's new weekly

Where to see a royal - page 3



Another look at the Duchess of Cambridge's visit to Kensington

pages 4 & 5

Westminster & Pimlico News (established 1857) ♦ Chelsea News (established 1857)
♦ Kensington News (established 1869)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY MA'AM: The Countess of Wessex continued to work on her birthday, visiting the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. During the day she was presented with a birthday cake. It featured 10 gold candles and was made by a beneficiary of Tomorrow's People Social Enterprise
Photo Tim Rooke/REX

THE paper serving ROYAL London

ROYAL LONDON

Happy birthday to a hard working Royal

A role model for the way ahead

FROM page 13

approves," said one royal pundit.

"It's unfortunate that the term do-gooder has become pejorative because that's what Sophie does, she does good – and she does an awful lot of it." For instance, not many royals choose to go to prison for the sake of doing good.

But Sophie did and she did so without fanfare or photocall last year when, in her capacity as the patron of the London College of Fashion, she visited Holloway Prison to give encouragement to inmates taking part in a LCF initiative to teach them fashion and seam-stressing skills, so that when they've done their time they can stand a much-improved chance of finding a job outside of the dark walls.

Anyone at the LCF will tell you that by becoming the college's first royal patron she is also doing the industry an awful lot of good; not just by wearing the best of British outfits but, again, by encouraging the great new designers of tomorrow with hands-on meetings and a deep interest in promoting a business that is so important to British exports.

Again, she does it without wanting the reward of the spotlight and the shower of publicity. Whilst other royal fashion enthusiasts have in the past blatantly courted publicity for their designer gowns, it's not Sophie's way to let flashbulbs get in the way of the work. Just before Christmas she made a working visit to the LCF at Lime Grove. The Press got wind of it and we asked for photos of the visit – the request was blanked as, frankly, pretty

pix in the paper weren't going to add much to the cause.

Perhaps it's her past PR training that gives her the nous. As any good PR knows, publicity only works properly when it is not seen as obvious publicity and it works best of all when it is seen as sincere and not self-serving.

Politicians who are currently making a pig's ear out of mishandling the delicate tensions and sensitivities arising out of the recent religious divides could learn a lot from the calm rationale of the Countess of Wessex. Recently, and again without a tribe of publicists, she hosted an event at Windsor Castle where she welcomed designers from the Islamic Fashion Festival, giving them a showcase and, more importantly in these troubled times of great misunderstanding, the key endorsement of her support.

One of the aims of the event, she reveals in the new edition of Harper's Bazaar, was to 'try to use fashion to break down barriers and dispel the myths about Muslim women' whom she says are evidently fashionable beneath a burka.

"It's a great way of bringing people together and saying 'Look, this is what we're really like'," she tells the high end magazine.

A royal promoting unity and understanding, she is clearly a role model for the way ahead.

she does good – and she does an awful lot of it



BIRTHDAY GIRL: A happy smile and a slice of cake for the Countess of Wessex on her 50th birthday

Photo Tim Rooke/REX

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WHERE TO SEE YOUR FAVOURITE ROYAL

FULL details of future and recent events in the ever-busy diaries of the many members of The Royal Family are available from the official website www.royal.gov.uk but here's the London schedule for the week ahead for Where To See A Royal.

Wednesday, January 28th

The Earl of Wessex, as Honorary Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, will attend an education committee meeting at Haberdashers Hall, West Smithfield EC1.

Saturday, January 31st

Princess Alexandra, as Royal Patron of Hemihelp, will attend the Children Helping Children concert at Cadogan Hall SW1.

Tuesday, January 27th

The Prince of Wales, as patron of the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, will attend a reception at The Guildhall.

WET WALL PANELS £50

ROYAL LONDON*Flying the flag for The Royal Borough*

Kate turns on the charm



FOLLOWING our comprehensive photo-coverage in last week's issue of the Duchess of Cambridge's visit to Kensington to visit the Family Friends charity and then officially open the Aldridge Academy and the new Kensington Leisure Centre, we are pleased to complete our photographic record of this special day with two more pages.

As can be seen from this page, Princess Kate was a huge hit with pupils at the Academy and she charmed all those with whom she spoke in her home borough.

It was a day the Royal Borough is unlikely to forget for a long time and cemented the relationship between Kensington and Chelsea and the Royal Family.

Photos by **RICHARD AUSTIN**

■ Turn to page 16



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Westminster & Pimlico NEWS

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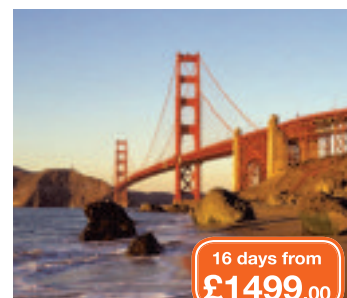
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ROYAL LONDON

Flying the flag for The Royal Borough



● **WAITING FOR A DUCHESS:** Ranks of photographers were ready for the arrival of Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge, who officially opened the Kensington Aldridge Academy and Leisure Centre.

Community groups and students took part in sporting displays before the Duchess unveiled a plaque to mark her visit and chatted to some of the participants.

She was presented with a bouquet and was then accompanied to her car by The Lord Lieutenant of Greater London Sir David Brewer, the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds and leader of the council Nick Paget-Brown. Meanwhile a discreet police presence outside kept watch over the royal vehicles.



A GRAND START TO 2015!



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WINE & DINE

The food and
drink page for
West London

Eating well on show at Olympia

THE new BBC Good Food Eat Well Show (sponsored by Lexus) will launch at Olympia in Kensington from Friday, February 27th to Sunday, March 1st. This new event, part of the BBC Good Food Show portfolio, is dedicated to showcasing healthy food brands, products and producers, and will demonstrate to visitors how they can achieve a balance between living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a passion for good food.

The show will comprise celebrity chef demonstrations, live dietary consultations, superfoods and more. One of the highlights of the show is the Healthy Kitchen which will host a line-up of celebrities, chefs and professionals demonstrating how easy it is to prepare healthy and good food. The schedule includes personalities such as Davina McCall, Lorraine Pascale, Hemsley + Hemsley, Marcus Bean and Jenni Falconer.

Another feature, the Eat Well Forum is dedicated to key diet and lifestyle challenges, and will play host to a range of discussions and informative talks on the relationship between food, health and wellbeing. Visitors can also enjoy the Eat Well



■ DAVINA McCall

Interview Stage, where questions will be answered by dietary specialists such as Natasha Corrett, Renee Maguire, Dale Pinnock and Rachel De Thamp. Visitors will also be given the opportunity to have their books signed at the WHSmith stand. In addition to the interview stage, one-to-one sessions with qualified dieticians will be held throughout the show. The sessions offer a range of different advice and guidance, and will be held in a private room on the show floor. The three day event will showcase 100 exhibitors selling their range of

products, including superfoods and delicacies.

Standard admission to the show is £15 for adults. Children aged 6-15 pay half the adult rate and under 5s are free. Over 65s and full time students with an ID save £2 off the adult rate.

If you book before January 31st you will receive a 15% discount off of the standard admission ticket price. The discount also applies to over 65s. Tickets can be booked by calling 0844 581 1368 or log onto www.bbcgoodfoodeatwellshow.com



■ JENNI Falconer



■ LORRAINE Pascale

MARK HIX'S RECIPE OF THE WEEK



Celery, Parmesan and tarragon risotto

CELERY is the perfect vegetable for making a risotto: it's got loads of flavour and you can put it in from the beginning and it will be cooked perfectly by the time the rice is ready. You can add more celery if you wish depending on the size of the stems.

Serves 4

60ml olive or rapeseed oil
6-8 sticks of celery, peeled if stringy and cut into ½cm dice
150g carnaroli rice
1ltr hot vegetable stock
60g butter
½tbsp tarragon, finely chopped
A few leaves of celery, chopped
60g freshly grated parmesan

Gently cook the diced celery for a few minutes in the olive oil, until soft. Add the rice and stir it well with a wooden spoon.

Gradually add the hot stock a little at a time, stirring constantly and ensuring that each addition has been fully absorbed by the rice before adding the next.

When the rice is almost cooked, add the tarragon, celery leaves and parmesan; continue to cook until the rice is soft and plump (the risotto should be quite moist). Stir in the butter and serve.



Sticking to the new year diet?

HOW'S that New Year's resolution of losing weight coming along? If the sweet treats have crept back into your daily routine, or Dry January has become awash with weekend wine, don't despair.

In 2012, there was a point when everyone seemed to be talking about the 5:2 diet. More of an eating plan than a diet, it simply involves two 'fasting' days a week, when your calorie intake needs to be a maximum of 500 for women or 600 for men, and five blissfully normal definitely-not-on-a-diet days.

Three years on and the New Year bookshelves are still groaning under the weight of new titles; Kate Harrison's 5:2 Good Food Kitchen, for one. And that's because it works.

"From the first day I did it, I realised it was the easiest approach to controlling my weight I'd ever tried," notes Harrison. "I lost 31lbs, gained energy, confidence and a complete loss of guilt about food. And it inspired me to write four books."

Now, I'm not much of a calorie

counter. Weight Watchers put paid to that about 15 years ago, when I found myself totting up how many 'points' my enviably slim and non-dieting lunch date was consuming, while staring miserably at my Crispbreads. But working out the tastiest way to consume just 500 calories - and sticking to it by telling myself I can eat whatever I want tomorrow - is something I can just about manage, especially if it's only for two days out of seven.

"On a weekly basis, you're slashing at least 3,000 calories from what you'd normally eat, which is equal to a pound of real weight loss - not water loss,"

says diet and fitness expert Laura Williams

"It's a simple question of sums and creating deficits."

I'm only on week two, but am happy to keep it up - and losing 2.5lbs in seven days has certainly spurred me on.

I would recommend avoiding 'virtually calorie-free' (and also completely tasteless) noodles, and discovering low-calorie foods you don't dislike. A massive salad hits all the right notes, Marks & Spencer's mini hot cross buns are a perfect 100-calorie fix and there's an array of low-cal ready meals on the market that are a lot more tasty than you think - and make it easy to keep fasting, even when you're too busy to cook.

Try it - you might like it. And if you do, and you find your scales are suddenly pointing at your goal weight, you can drop down to one fasting day a week to keep it all off.

That's what Harrison did, after dropping from a wobbly size 16 to a slender 10-12 - which she still is - three years ago. Here are her top tips to keep you on track, plus three delicious recipes to inspire your fasting days...



TOP 5:2 DIET TIPS

- Choose the right Fast Days - and mark them in your diary. You want a day when you're busy, but not under too much pressure.
- Plan your meals and shop ahead.
- Focus on flavour and freshness. Aim for seasonal ingredients - salads and berries in summer, hearty soups in winter. Making your own is quicker than you'd think and you can freeze portions to cut time in the kitchen on a Fast Day.
- Spice up your 5:2 life with chillis, spices and strong flavours.
- Drink up. Often when we think we're hungry, we're actually thirsty. So drink lots of water, black coffee or tea - if you add milk, count the calories.
- Distract yourself. Hunger tends to come in waves, so have a brew or phone a friend and you'll forget all about it.
- Join the Facebook group ([facebook.com/groups/the52diet](https://www.facebook.com/groups/the52diet)) - there are members there around the clock, ready to spur you on.
- Write down what you eat on a Fast Day - and how you feel - to help you discover what works best for you.
- Weigh yourself no more than once a week, or less, at the same time of day. Our weight fluctuates so much that you don't want to get disheartened by weighing daily. Look for other positive signs too - like a pair of jeans that are tight before you start, but may well show losses sooner than the scales do.
- Enjoy a balanced diet - and treats - on your non-fasting days. When you're not fasting, you can eat normally, up to around 2,000 calories for women and 2,400 for men.

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

The Red Noses are back again

Simon's got talent - for face painting!

SIMON Cowell and David Walliams took their bromance to another level as Simon showed off his face painting prowess by making David's face funny for Red Nose Day. The pictures mark the launch of this year's Red Nose Day campaign.

Tess Daly and Rochelle Humes are also making a splash with their slap, all in the name of charity. The brave pair let husbands Vernon Kay and Marvin Humes loose on their lippies for Comic Relief.

David, Tess and Rochelle hope that their resulting makeovers will inspire the public to make their faces funny for money this Red Nose Day which takes place on Friday, March 13th.

David said: "I feel absolutely beautiful. Simon's been hard at it all evening and he's even chosen colours that complement my eyes - I suspect this isn't the first time Simon has picked up a make-up brush."

Funny for money

These celeb duos prove how easy it is to make your face funny for money, and as ever the charity is expecting a fantastic turn out from the generous people of London who raised and donated more than £8,123,108.97 for Red Nose Day 2013. Whether the public paint their face, wear a Red Nose or grow a sponsored comb-over, they'll be joining millions of people up and down the country as they raise life-changing cash.

Comic Relief spends the money raised through Red Nose Day to help poor and vulnerable people living incredibly tough lives both here in London and the rest of the UK, and across Africa. Since the last Red Nose Day, money raised has funded nearly 200 projects right here in the region, like Barking and Dagenham Youth Dance, which gives young people aged 13-19 a chance to perform and work with some of the country's top choreographers, experiencing many forms of dance from street to contemporary.

The public can top off their funny faces with one of the nine new Red Noses to choose from. They're a right bunch of characters and are hiding away in special surprise bags, available at Sainsbury's, Oxfam and rednoseday.com.

The celebrity pairs are joined by a host of famous faces launching this year's campaign including Claudia Winkleman and Fearnie Cotton. Many can be seen donning the Red Nose along with one of seven different Red Nose Day T-Shirts designed by Anya Hindmarch, Diane von Furstenberg, Henry Holland and Matthew Williamson. The collection, which also includes a onesie, is now available exclusively from TK Maxx and tkmaxx.com.

Launching this year's Red Nose Day on Friday, March 13th



■ DAVID Walliams and Simon Cowell launching this year's Red Nose campaign

The campaign will culminate in a night of TV that will be broadcast live from the London Palladium, for the first time ever, on Friday 13th March at 7pm on BBC One. Some of the nation's favourite personalities, including Davina McCall



and Lenny Henry will present an unforgettable evening of entertainment packed full of celebrity performances, comedy gold and silly spoofs.

The public will also be treated to never-seen-before sketches. Dawn French returns as Geraldine Granger, Vicar of Dibley, as she campaigns for the role of Bishop amongst stiff competition from a

host of familiar faces. Rowan Atkinson will return to Red Nose Day as Mr Bean, and there will be highlights of Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights Live starring Peter Kay. As well as this there will be special edition of The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice presented by Jo Brand, and stand-up performances from Trevor Noah and Cardinal Burns.

Other TV treats include the first ever The People's Strictly for Comic Relief, where inspiring members of the public, nominated by their friends and family, will partner with professional Strictly dancers to take on the glamorous ballroom challenge.

Dance frenzy

The Great Comic Relief Bake Off makes a star-studded return as 16 celebrity bakers, including Abbey Clancy, Gok Wan and Jonathan Ross, try to raise as much dough as possible for Red Nose Day. Strictly Come Dancing's Claudia Winkleman will call on the nation to take part in the first ever Comic Relief Danceathon on Sunday, March 8th. The six hour non-stop dance frenzy will take place at The SSE Arena, Wembley and in locations across the country.

Also donning his dancing shoes will be Dermot O'Leary who will bust out his best moves on Dermot's Day of Dance for Comic Relief in an extraordinary fundraising feat as he boogies non-stop for a staggering 24 hours.

Fundraisers feeling inspired can get involved by wearing a wig, donning a daft disguise or text-donating a silly selfie to make their face funny for money. To top it off, for a limited time only the public will be able to perfect their funny face pout by picking up Rimmel London's limited edition 'Red Nose Red' lipstick by Kate for Comic Relief.

Since the last Red Nose Day, Comic Relief has helped over 12 million people living unimaginably tough lives all over the world, using money raised through Red Nose Day, Sport Relief and other partnerships. Money raised this Red Nose Day will help to change the lives of millions more.



■ FUNNY FOR MONEY: Rochelle and Marvin Humes, above, and Vernon Kay and Tess Daly get in the spirit



What women really want for Valentine's Day

ATTENTION lovers of London - looking for those really special flowers to impress your woman on Valentine's Day?

How about a bouquet of Gold of Kinabalu orchids, they'll only cost you £36,000 a bunch.

But get your order in early, as the orchid reckoned to be the world's most expensive flower only actually flowers once every 15 years.

And to lay your hands on one, you only need to nip across to a national park in Malaysia and leap over the security fence that rings this endangered species which botanists say is on the verge of extinction.

But if you don't think that giving your Valentine a gift that makes her a party to en-

vironmental floracide is very uncool, go ahead; the Gold of Kinabalu costs £3,000 a stem.

There is one little additional catch, it only flowers in April.

For those preferring something a bit more immediate, the Juliet Bloom cultivated by English rose guru David Austin is said to be worth £3 million. That's the value put on the 15 years of research and hard work that it took David Austin to create the pinky rose which now sells for £90 a bouquet through Interflora.

Or should Valentine roses be deep and dark red, suggesting somewhat blatantly what most men want for Valentine's Day?

The surprise news for married blokes is that we should save our money - according to the

experts, most partners would rather have a clean kitchen floor.

"What women want is a house that has been cleaned, but cleaned really well," says clinical psychologist Dr Jill W Bley.

"Alternatively, they'd like you to do the laundry, but to do it well, or just a simple but heartfelt 'thank you'."

Other popular requests for Valentine's Day include: spending a few hours actually listening to your partner or breakfast in bed - which should not be difficult as this year February 14th falls on a Saturday.

According to a poll of women by the dating site eHarmony, the vast majority of women (87 per cent) said that their partner spending time with them on Valentine's Day would matter more to them than a gift.

So no popping out to the pub after you've astonished her with forty grand's worth of orchids.

Besides time spent with their loved one, more than a third of women in relationships said that rather than flowers or chocolates, they would prefer a Valentine's gift related to their personal passion or hobby.

As far as the traditional oo la la goes, before shopping online at fingleaves.com among the sensual collection that they say will make a woman "feel boudoir beautiful", men should make sure that their partner is among the only three per cent of women who told eHarmony that they wanted lingerie for Valentine's Day.

If in doubt, get that mop out and clean the kitchen floor.

TALK OF THE TOWN

MUSIC ★ THEATRE ★ PUBS

*The entertainment scene
in West London*

'It seemed silly not to take a chance'

COLIN Firth, who was made a Freeman of the City of London in 2012, is back on the capital's screens this week as a covert agent who poses as a tailor, and works with other agents to recruit and train skilled youth to preserve and protect Great Britain - all while looking super-dapper.

When Firth was injured during his latest incarnation, it wasn't a medic that was called over, it was a photographer.

"Every time I got a bruise or a broken tooth, rather than get the nurse in, it was, 'Get the cameras in, so we can show you're going through it!'" recalls the 54-year-old.

That's because the man known to millions as Mr Darcy, from both the *Pride And Prejudice* TV series and *Bridget Jones* movies, has turned action spy and martial arts expert, in the comic book adaptation *Kingsman: The Secret Service*.

"When we were shooting it, the stunt guy would say, 'Let's get the B-roll in to film some of

this, because nobody's going to believe it'."

Firth, looking handsome in a dark suit and black-rimmed glasses, couldn't believe it either, and is more than aware that his many fans will see it as an unexpected role.

"It was unexpected for me too, but it sparked my interest immediately because of that," admits the Hampshire-born actor, who was already intrigued by the director Matthew Vaughn, who also helmed *Kick-Ass* and *X-Men: First Class*.

"I think he's a one-off. There was no script yet, it was a work in progress and he wasn't ready to show it to me, so I just went to hear what he had to say and I found him very compelling," reveals Firth, who was Oscar nominated for Tom Ford's *A Single Man* in 2010, and walked away with the gold statuette for *The King's Speech* the following year.

"Something in me just went, 'Why not?' It's so unusual for me, that it seemed silly not to take a chance."

Early on, Vaughn was "full of dire warning" of the extent of training he'd be required to do. "And how much it would hurt and how much I was going to hate him by the end of it, and was I up for that," Firth adds.

"It was three hours a day for about six months, and started off in my back garden with a squat, lunge and somersaults, and then the choreography kicked in. I was learning to use parts of my body that I'd never used - I didn't even know they existed. It was painful, but I warmed to it and found it exhilarating," he continues.

Something completely different

"This wasn't the stuff I was doing when I was young. I wasn't one of the more athletic drama students. My recreation was a lot more sedate in my youth, so it was a chance in my 50s to do something completely different, and go into a bit of a physical world for a while."

Bar one stunt, involving a rig, it's all Firth on screen. "I said

that to somebody, and they looked at me with horrified disappointment that I would tell people such an egregious lie," he notes, smiling.

"One of the reasons I feel so driven to tell people, is that I won't have gone through all that pain for nothing."

The effort definitely paid off. Not only did Livia, his Italian wife of 17 years, appreciate her newly honed husband ("It got noticed!" he confesses, laughing), but he looks a natural in the role of Harry, an impeccably suave spy and member of the secret organisation, known as *Kingsman*.

Harry recruits street kid Eggsy, played by newcomer Taron Egerton, and trains him up just as a global threat emerges from a twisted tech genius, brought to life by Samuel L. Jackson. A pastiche of the spy movies we all know and love, Firth acknowledges there's a lot of violence - but "it's wildly implausible".

"It's like a provocative pantomime, and in some ways I think it's sending up the extremity. I can't imagine how anyone would emulate it, because you'd need to be trained to do that stuff. It's closer to what you get in *Monty Python*, than it is to the realistic films about the Middle East."

He hasn't decided whether he'll allow his two sons - Luca, 13 and Matteo, 11 - to watch it (he also has a 24-year-old son from a previous relationship with actress Meg Tilly).

"I'm not going to publicly recommend this to anyone under 15. But it's different, because my children saw me train, and went to set and saw me backstage and saw me in the workplace, so they have a very different perspective."

And whether or not people believe it to be gratuitously violent is "a valid conversation" to be had, Firth adds.

"There are fights in *Punch And Judy* and *Shakespeare*, and there's violence in war films and zombie films. There's violence of all types, and unless you believe they should be extracted from all storytelling, then it has to become a conversation about where your own threshold is," he remarks.

"Whatever that threshold is, Matthew likes to go towards the edge of it, and sit there and be provocative and outrageous but without, I think, any intention to horrify. I think the violence in it is comic in tone, satirical and completely silly."

There'll be action of a different



■ COLIN Firth and his wife Livia at the world premiere of *Kingsman: The Secret Service* at Odeon Leicester Square

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sort, when Firth starts filming *Deep Water* with *The Theory Of Everything's* director James Marsh this spring. "It's about Donald Crowhurst, who was a participant in the round the world yacht race in 1968," he explains. "But nothing's ever set in stone until it's ready to go."

Genius, on the other hand, a chronicle in which he plays Max Perkins, the book editor at

renowned publisher Scribner, who oversaw works by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway, is in the can.

The movie marks his third collaboration with Nicole Kidman, following *The Railway Man* and *Before I Go Sleep*. He grins when asked if they'll work together again. "Inevitably," Firth replies. "I think we'll go for the multiple box-sets."

EXTRA TIME

- *Kingsman: The Secret Service* was written by Matthew Vaughn and Jonathan Ross' wife Jane Goldman, and is based on the comic book by Mark Millar, after he and Vaughn conceived of the idea on the set of *Kick-Ass*.
- Vaughn was inspired after reading a newspaper article about the fact the Dr. No director Terence Young cast Sean Connery against the wishes of 007 author Ian Fleming, and realised he had to turn him into a gentleman spy.
- More than 60 young men were screen-tested before Taron Egerton, from Aberystwyth, Wales, and fresh out of drama school, was cast in the role of street kid Eggsy.
- Martial artist and action choreographer Brad Allan, who worked with Vaughn on *Kick-Ass*, coordinated the fight sequences with a team that included a parkour champion and a break dancer.
- *Kingsman: The Secret Service* is released on Thursday, January 29

TALK OF THE TOWN ★ *The entertainment scene in West London*

Amid rumours of a Rolling Stones 'Satisfaction' 50th anniversary gig in London

ARE The Rolling Stones heading for a London show this summer? That's the current betting among Stones-watchers who are tipping the capital's favourite rock sons to return for a home-town gig to mark the 50th anniversary of their greatest hit, 'Satisfaction'.

The Stones have not performed in London for two years, when they played two massive shows in Hyde Park to a crowd of more than 130,000.

But they have and are playing everywhere else on their current 'On Fire' world tour and expectations are growing that the band could close the tour with a huge gig in London in August.

The 'On Fire' tour began in February last year and so far it has rocked through the United Arab Emirates, Japan, Singapore, China, a dozen countries in Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

The Stones are shortly to announce that their world tour will next visit South America, with gigs in Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Chile.

A lucrative leg of the USA in the Spring and early Summer is tipped to follow after that and then.....a glorious home-coming?

Stones fans certainly hope so, especially after Keith Richards recently acknowledged that the band's leviathan tour could go on.

"South America is lined up for February and after that....well I know what the Stones tours get like, they tend to get extended," said Keith.

The Stones have closed their last three world tours in London and the last time that they toured without playing on home turf was way back in 1999 on the Bridges To Babylon tour.

There are two special anniversary reasons for the Stones to close their show in town. First, 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of their first No.1 with a song they wrote themselves – 'The Last Time'.

Better with age

As Mick Jagger will mark his 72nd birthday in July, clearly 'The Last Time' has a resonance as pundits are bound to predict that soon the elder statesmen of rock and roll are due to call it a day.

But then headlines have been predicting 'It's The Last Time' for the Stones on every tour they've done since the Eighties and it never actually is, partly because the demand to see the Stones just gets bigger and bigger and partly because, as Keith Richards has noted, "we're like a fine wine, we just get better with age".

But there's a much better reason than 'The Last Time' for a Stones show in London this summer – August marks the 50th anniversary of the global hit that made them superstars, their signature song 'Satisfaction', which was born in Keith's flat in St John's Wood.

With a legendary guitar riff which was aptly described by Newsweek as "the notes that shook the world", the song gave the Stones their first No.1 hit in the US and topped singles charts in the UK and around the globe.

"It was the song that really made The Rolling Stones," Jagger noted afterwards. "It changed us from just another band into a huge, monster band. It has a very catchy guitar riff, it has a great guitar sound; which was original at the time. And it captures the spirit of the times, which is very important in those kinds of songs, which is alienation."

But ironically, the Stones' greatest hit almost did not happen and it was born in an almost-mystical way as the riff came to Keith Richards in a dream while he was sleeping at his flat in Carlton Hill.

"I wrote Satisfaction in my sleep," Keith recalled. "I woke up with this riff in my head and thank God I had a little Philips cassette recorder next to me by the side of the bed. I picked up my guitar and pressed record and I ran through the sequence once and then I fell asleep again."

"The miracle being that I looked at the cassette player the next morning and I knew that I'd put a brand-new tape in the previous night, and I saw that it was at the end."

"So I pushed rewind and there was Satisfac-



Photo by Jake Nowakowski/NewsPix/REX

Will it be the last time?

tion. It was just the bare bones of the song, about two minutes of acoustic guitar, and then 40 minutes of me snoring."

The band recorded the song at Chess studios in Chicago but Keith did not recognise it as a hit single. He suggested instead that the Stones just used it as a track on their coming album, which needed an extra song to complete it.

"I didn't imagine the riff as a guitar riff, I was imagining horns to play it, not guitar. So when we recorded it I had the riff in my head the way that Otis Redding did it later, as a horn line."

"But we didn't have any horns in the studio and as I was only going to lay down a dub I used that fuzz tone so that I could give a shape to what the horns were supposed to do. But the fuzz tone had never been heard anywhere before and that's the sound that caught everybody's imagination."

"When we first started working on it, Keith didn't like it much," Jagger recalled, "he didn't want it to be a single, he didn't think that it would do very well."

As it happened, it did rather handsomely and a 50th anniversary London gig would be a fitting tribute for the song ranked No.2 in Rolling Stone magazine's 500 Greatest Songs Of All Time, in which it was only – and aptly – pipped by

Bob Dylan's 'Like A Rolling Stone'.

A Stones homecoming would top quite a year of big music anniversaries.

This year also marks the 50th birthday of The Beatles' 'Yesterday', another classic anthem which also came from a dream – in May 1965 Paul McCartney woke up in his room in Wimpole Street with the melody in his head for what has become the world's most-popular love song.

2015 also marks the 100th birthday of Frank

Sinatra and the year will see all manner of re-releases, a Sinatra app, TV documentaries and, at The London Palladium, a special all-star show running from March to April.

And on February 7th at the Brooklyn Bowl at the O2, the 70th birthday of the great Bob Marley will be marked with a night honouring the reggae giant with Legend, the UK's leading Marley tribute band - tickets £11 from www.theo2.co.uk



ANNIVERSARY gigs this year will mark the 100th birthday of Frank Sinatra and the 70th birthday of Bob Marley

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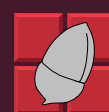
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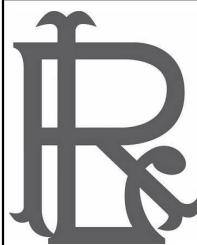
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LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

sport

Rangers aim to make mark



LOFTUS ROAD RANGERS REVIEW

AFTER a two-week break to re-focus and re-charge batteries, QPR resume their desperate quest for Premier League points with a visit to Stoke City on Saturday.

Rangers are hovering just one place above bottom club Leicester City, a point adrift of Burnley in 17th place.

Harry Redknapp's men are still seeking their first away league point of the season and it's time they ended that disastrous run and stopped relying on their impressive home form to steer them clear of troubled waters.

And where better to break their away day hoodoo than at the home of the team now managed by Mark Hughes?

Many Rs fans have not forgiven Stoke's Welsh boss for their club's last relegation from the top flight in May 2013.

In many respects QPR are still paying the price for that failure. The board believe they have invested enough in the last few years, to the point where Redknapp is now scratching around for late loan deals ahead of next Monday's closure of the annual winter transfer window.

After narrowly avoiding relegation on the last day of the season in May 2012, Hughes vowed that the club would never again find itself in such a predicament while he was in charge.

He embarked upon an extravagant summer spending spree which saw the arrival of keeper Julio Cesar, defender Jose Bosingwa, midfielders Esteban Granero, Park Ji-sung and Stephane Mbia, as well as strikers Djibril Cisse and Bobby Zamora.

But the poor form continued and Hughes led his side to just four points from their opening 12 games, including eight defeats and no victories.

● RUGBY UNION

Dorking II... 32 Hammersmith & Fulham II... 5

HAMMERSMITH and Fulham 2s are still battling for their first league win of the season after slumping to a crushing 27-point defeat at Dorking on Saturday.

Hammers were hoping to break their duck after coming close against Chichester and Westcombe Park in the previous week's Shield Division II games.

They stayed in touching distance of the home side after electing to play the first half uphill and into a heavy wind. But Dorking kicked on from their 12-0 half-time lead, turned the screw and ran out comfortable winners.

Although currently bottom of the league, Hammers remain in touching distance of London Irish Wanderers.

Captain Julien Draper said: "It's disappointing. We had been building towards our first league win but unfortunately we just didn't turn up in the second-half today and paid the price."

Hammers suffered a string of injuries before the half-hour mark, with fly-half Sean Walsh, centre Alex Woodcock and wing Will Buchanan all limping off. The changes rocked the team and Hammers never hit their stride in the second-half, conceding four soft tries. Winger Tony Bryant's solo score late on was little consolation for the visitors.

Hammers' Ladies also lost last weekend, losing 5-17 to Romford as they crashed out of the Intermediate Plate.

The first XV were handed a walkover in the Middlesex Cup against Staines but Hammers' senior side are back in action in the league this Saturday at Tabard.

He was sacked in November 2013 after 10 months in charge with Rs bottom of the table and looking devoid of all hope of avoiding relegation.

Although Redknapp managed to conjure four wins, including a home success against Fulham and a shock 1-0 victory against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge, it was not enough and relegation was confirmed with three games still to play.

Redknapp inherited a mess and there was no avoiding the inevitable.

But Hughes, who voluntarily walked away from Fulham in 2011 because he – and his adviser Kia Joorabchian – thought he was worthy of higher status, is now steadily rebuilding his reputation at Stoke, who currently sit halfway in the PL table, 10 points better off than QPR.

Stoke's uncompromising, in-your-face style fashioned by Hughes' predecessor Tony Pulis is still alive and kicking – literally, some would say! – but this season they have added a touch of smooth to go with the rough in former Barcelona striker Bojan, who netted their only goal in their 1-0 win at Leicester last time out.

Even so, QPR must take heart from the evidence that Stoke are no longer nigh invincible at their Britannia Stadium, where they have suffered five defeats (to Aston Villa, Leicester, Southampton, Burnley and Chelsea) and been held to draws (by West Ham and Man Utd).

After a couple of weeks' rest to ease and manage his creaking limbs, veteran striker Bobby Zamora is likely to feature up front alongside top scorer Charlie Austin. Zamora's name will forever be enshrined in QPR history after scoring their sensational last-gasp winner to secure promotion in last year's play-off final but that was then.

This season he has managed just one goal in 21 league and cup appearances, so it's time, having just turned 34, that he started to deliver the goods again.

Long-suffering travelling Hoops fans can surely also expect to see the debut of recent loan signing Mauro Zarate, who scored in last Saturday's behind-closed-doors 4-3 home win against Millwall. Zarate netted twice in eight games for West Ham earlier this season and his creative, attacking nous from just behind the front two could be the key to unlocking Stoke's no-nonsense defence.

And that wouldn't please Mr Hughes.



Bobby Zamora needs to start firing for Rangers
Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South



Kurt Zouma tussling with Bradford's former Chelsea youth prospect Billy Knott – the subject of an interview in last week's LWN Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

Lampard ready for fans' reaction

■ From back page

What irks the Chelsea fans is that just before he signed what turned out to be his final one-year deal with Chelsea, in 2013, Lampard said he could not imagine playing for another Premier League club. "In January time it looked like I might be leaving," Lampard told TalkSPORT in May 2013.

"I'd been injured, to be fair to the club, for nearly two months. The manager changed, there wasn't stability at the club and they were looking to the future.

"I would say that from January to March-April I thought this would be my last season at Chelsea.

"There were a couple of opportunities to stay here (in the Premier League) but I can't imagine playing for anyone else after being 12 years at Chelsea. I've got a lot of respect for a lot of other Premier League clubs, particularly the top ones, but I'm not sure I could have done that."

Fans don't like hypocrisy where it concerns their club.

No doubt Lampard's PR team will be going into full-blown damage limitation mode this

week, hoping to manipulate the Chelsea fans into giving him a cheer when one could legitimately expect a jeer.

To be honest, I wouldn't be surprised if Lampard didn't suffer from a slight injury preventing him getting on the City team-sheet.

Interesting

But should he be selected, the reaction of the fans will indeed be interesting.

In days gone by, when Chelsea's crowd was comprised of true Blues fans and not a significant number of tourists that inhabit the seats nowadays, Lampard would have received boos every time he touched the ball or warmed up on the sideline.

Come the 5.30pm kick-off on Saturday, I doubt there will be more than a murmur of dissent aimed at Lampard. The tourists will be just happy to watch the game, unaware of the subtext. Sadly, that just about sums up the crowd contribution at Stamford Bridge.

Their lukewarm support of the team irks Mourinho. His response was to criticise them,

which has given rise to a mocking chant from opposition fans.

Mourinho's description of his FA Cup exit as a "disgrace" was apt but his criticism of his own fans was equally disgraceful.

BETTINE & BANTER

THOSE who enjoy a flutter on the football will be interested to hear that some lucky – shrewd? – punters made a killing thanks to Bradford's City astonishing FA Cup heroics at Chelsea on Saturday.

Bradford were backed, in-play, at odds of 459/1 to win at the Bridge despite going 2-0 down in the opening 38 minutes.

Betfair also confirmed that the Bantams were matched at the huge price of 969/1 in their Any Other Away Win (Bradford to score at least four in a victory) market.

For every winner there are losers. Some £44k was matched on Chelsea to win at Betfair's minimum price of 100/1 on (1.01 in decimal odds) as punters thought they would try to pinch a few extra bob with Blues seemingly coasting at 2-0. Ouch!

If you'd had enough faith in Fulham to claim a draw Sunderland on Saturday, you would have got odds of 2.72/1 (3.72).

Looking ahead to this Saturday's games involving our three local clubs, Chelsea are a best-priced 19/20 to beat Manchester City (with Bet365 & Bwin), QPR are generally 5-1 to get their first win of the season at Stoke, while Fulham are 14/5 to take the points at Blackburn.

Good luck – and remember, always bet responsibly.

Tony Mac

Blue & White In Brief

■ **CHELSEA U18s** were emphatic 5-0 winners of the top versus bottom clash against struggling Norwich City at Cobham on Saturday.

Hubert Adamczyk fired them ahead shortly after the half-hour mark with a close-range finish before substitute Kyle Scott's strike from 25 yards put Chelsea two up at the interval.

Second-half goals from Miro Muheim and a couple from sub Tammy Abraham sealed victory for the hosts.

Chelsea: Thompson, Wakefield, Suljic, Brady, Grant, Sammut, Ali, Christie-Davies (Scott 36), Muheim (Tomori 62), Bolkiah (Abraham 62), Adamczyk.

■ **ALTHOUGH not quite at their best, Chelsea U21s still took a 3-0 half-time lead at West Ham United on Friday night.**

Kasey Palmer gave the visitors a fifth minute lead before a brace from Dominic Solanke in the final minutes of the first-half put Blues in command.

Bottom-placed Hammers reduced the deficit seven minutes after the break with the only goal of the second-half but Chelsea did enough to ensure the 3-1 win, which puts them joint-top of the U18s league with Southampton.

Chelsea: Beoney, Aina (Dabo 72), Conroy, Clarke-Salter, Dasilva, Collett, Houghton, Musonda (Boga 61), Brown, Solanke, Palmer (Mitchell 77).

■ **FULHAM U18s** were impressive 4-0 winners at West Bromwich Albion on Saturday.

Penalties from Foday Nabay and Josh Walker put the visitors in control before another Walker strike and a Luca De La Torre header sealed it.

Fulham: Rodak, Sheckleford, Elworthy, Adebayo, Edun, Nabay, Smile, Humphrys, De La Torre, Walker, Redford.

■ **FULHAM** are through to the U21 Premier League International Cup quarter-finals after last week's 2-1 home victory against PSV Eindhoven.

SPORT

Thursday, January 29th, 2015

● SPORTS DESK: 07711 169 427

Blues suffer Cup 'shame'

JOSE Mourinho said that his charges could not win the quadruple – Premier League, Champions League, FA Cup and Capital One Cup. And, as he is fond of telling us, he is always right.

And so it proved. But deep down, I'm sure that he never felt that the FA Cup would be the first trophy to elude them.

The 4-2 defeat at home to League One Bradford City on Saturday will go down in the annals of FA Cup history as one of its greatest shocks.

Mourinho is not afraid of losing – granted, it doesn't happen often – but what hurts him most is when defeat results from his team's failure to perform.

At Tottenham at the beginning of the month, a 5-3 defeat was followed by distraction tactics – blaming the ref, the media and whoever caught his eye. But when I asked him to explain the shambles of the FA Cup debacle, he blamed no-one but his players.

● By LWN reporter **Paul Lagan**
sport@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Mourinho's diatribe was scathing: He said to me: "At this moment I feel happy for Bradford City. I can find in my bad feeling for the result, space to be happy for them. But I also feel ashamed. The players should feel the same."

"But that is the beauty of the FA Cup. I also feel that if we lose, it's a disgrace – a sports disgrace, but a disgrace nevertheless."

"It happens to all teams but not a lot. It's unacceptable to lose to a team from a lower league."

"There is nothing we can do about the FA Cup. It will stay in our history as a negative thing. But now we have a lot to play for, enough motivation to carry on. "If I was you I'd be critical of the players and me, but not just that. Bradford don't deserved to be forgotten. They were impressive."

It is fair to say that Bradford (or Barnsley as he called

that a bit later on) 'be forgotten by Chelsea fans, or visiting supporters either.

Ex-Chelsea youth product Billy Knott was a star performer for Bradford City and when I had a few words of encouragement with him before kick-off, I also gave him a couple of copies of last week's LWN in which he gave us an exclusive interview.

While it was painful to watch the Blues capitulate in such a pitiful manner, I was more than pleased for the 22-year-old, and reckon the interview might just have helped him focus on what was needed.

This is part of what he said: "Striker Jon Stead has played at the highest level, so I think we can get at them. If we can turn Chelsea, get the ball in the air and try and make it into a bit of a battle, we might have a chance. If you give them too much respect, you can suffer in the way they beat Swansea (5-0). They can go into gear seven."

"But if we will give it 100 per cent, go in for every challenge and run ourselves into the ground, I think our fans will appreciate that and whatever the score is, they will clap us off the pitch. We will do what we can



This week at STAMFORD BRIDGE

and hope it's a cup upset."
Boy, and what a cup upset it was!

LWN went to press before the outcome of Chelsea's Capital One Cup semi-final, second leg on Tuesday against Liverpool but Mourinho was determined that there would be no lack of concentration or motivation from the players.

A date at Wembley on February 1 for the final would go some way to ease the pain of the FA Cup embarrassment.

But it's a return to Premier League action on Saturday with the biggest game of the season to boot – the arrival of second-placed Manchester City and the return of a certain Frank Lampard.

Chelsea are five points clear of the champions and a victory for the west Londoners will go a long way to winning the title.

In normal circumstances the points outcome would be the main talking point of the top-of-the-table clash but it's the reaction of the Chelsea fans to Lampard that is the stand-out issue.

Lampard left his first club West Ham for Chelsea in 2001 with a bitter taste in his mouth. This stems from the fact that Lampard feels he was under-appreciated by the Upton Park faithful and has never forgiven the club for the fact that his dad Frank, who was assistant manager to Harry Redknapp, felt obliged to resign over his brother-in-law's shock dismissal.

Now Lampard is fearing a backlash from the Chelsea fans who cheered him to the hilt as he won trophy after trophy for the SW6 club.

With close on 600 matches for the Blues and more than 200 goals, Lampard would be expected to be considered a Chelsea legend and many people still regard him accordingly.

But he certainly blotted his copybook with his controversial signing for Manchester City in August.

To be fair, Mourinho decided that Lampard was surplus to requirements at Stamford Bridge and allowed him to leave once it became clear that he had secured the signature of Cesc Fabregas.

So while the club can have no recourse to feel aggrieved, the fans certainly can.

The murky cloud that surrounded his move to City, when it was believed by all – City and the FA apart – that he had signed a two-year deal to join American MLS new boys New York City FC, has left many Chelsea fans fuming.

No-one begrudged Lampard going to New York after his 13 years with Chelsea, or – as it was touted at the time – even signing a supposed six-month loan deal to Manchester City just to keep his fitness levels before joining up with New York in January.

As it turned out, Lampard had in fact joined Manchester – not NY – for a short-term deal as a free agent.

■ CONTINUED ON PAGE 27



Didier Drogba points an accusing finger at Bradford City's Rory McArdle Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South



Focus on Craven Cottage

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

BACK-to-back home league victories and a hard-fought goalless draw away to Premier League opposition in the FA Cup... yes, it's been a decent start to the new year for Fulham, who are unbeaten in their last six matches.

It says much for the confidence and spirit running through the club these days that manager Kit Symons even expressed some disappointment after Saturday's 0-0 draw at Sunderland in the fourth round of the FA Cup, which earned his side a replay at Craven Cottage next Tuesday.

Sunderland were forced to play the last 25 minutes with 10 men after Jack Rodwell was sent-off for his second yellow card offence, while substitute Hugo Rodallega almost snatched victory for the visitors when he drove his low shot against the post in the closing stages.

"I think there's an element of satisfaction to take but also a bit of frustration," Symons said. "Before the game I fancied us to win it and when it was 11 v 11 I still fancied us to win it."

"After the sending off you'll never have a better opportunity to beat a Premier League

team away from home but we'll play at Craven Cottage and I fancy us to go through now."

"In the dressing room afterwards we said we've got to pass the ball quicker, make them work and stretch them and then work the opening, and we didn't really do that quite well enough."

"Our quality in the final third has been fairly good in recent weeks but it wasn't quite there today."

"But to come to a Premier League side and acquit ourselves as we did, I think we should be very proud. So I'm a little bit disappointed but, overall, I'm very proud of my players – they put in a real shift for the club."

Sunderland had chances of their own to grab the win, particularly when Jermain Defoe came to life in the second-half, but the England striker – among others – was denied time and again by the excellent Marcus Bettinelli in the visiting goal.

"It's a funny one with 'Betts' now because I expect him to do that week in, week out because he's been tremendous for us, he's been really, really good," Symons added.

"And when he was called on today he was

more than a match. He was in inspired form but, like I say, that's him, that's how he's been. He's a really bright young keeper, he's a fantastic character and one that we're very pleased to have."

The Fulham manager used the cup tie as an opportunity to rest Ross McCormack – the hat-trick hero in last week's 3-2 home win against Nottingham Forest – and Rodallega. The pair came on as second-half substitutes at the Stadium of Light, along with Alexander Kačaniklić.

"We've had an awful lot of football in a short space of time," he explained. "Obviously there was extra-time and penalties against Wolves last week. It's a cumulative effect."

"On the back of scoring his hat-trick in midweek, Ross has got a little bit of an Achilles problem and it just made sense to rest him up today."

Before next Tuesday's home Cup replay, Whites resume league action with a Championship visit to Blackburn Rovers on Saturday, hoping to extend an unbeaten run that includes consecutive home league wins against Reading and Nottingham Forest.